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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/643,908	08/20/2003	Masayuki Nakayasu	0425-1069P	4752
2292	7590	04/21/2006	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH			DUNN, DAVID R	
PO BOX 747			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			3616	
DATE MAILED: 04/21/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/643,908	NAKAYASU ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	David Dunn	3616	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 March 2006 and 11 April 2006.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 2-4 and 6-16 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 2-4,6,7 and 9-16 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
     Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
     Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on March 13, 2006 has been entered.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 2-7 and 9-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Katsuda et al. (US 2003/0029349)

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the

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inventor of this application and is thus not the invention “by another,” or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Katsuda et al. discloses an inflator comprising: a cylindrical inflator (12); a diffuser (20/40), an igniter accommodating chamber (23), a gas discharging hole (46), an imaginary center axis of the gas discharge being parallel to the axis of the inflator (see Figure 1); and only a single rupturable plate (19). See also Figures 10 and 12.

4. Claims 2-4, 7, 9, 12-14, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Metzger (US 5,854,441).

Metzger discloses an inflator comprising: a cylindrical inflator (2); a diffuser portion (1) attached to the second end of the inflator housing, the diffuser including a gas introducing chamber (below 9) in communication with the inflator housing through a first opening, an igniter accommodating chamber (left side of 1) for accommodating an igniter (4) and in communication with the gas introducing chamber through a second opening (above 9), the igniter accommodating chamber having a third opening (see left edge of 1) for inserting the igniter, at a portion opposing the second opening, and a gas discharging hole (8), an imaginary center axis (see dashed line through 8) parallel to the inflator housing; the diffuser portion defining a gas path there through; and only a single rupturable plate (6) blocking the gas path.

The axis of the rupturable plate and the igniter are coincident with each other. Regarding claim 4, the side wall of the cylindrical cup opposes and closes the second opening (i.e., near 13); the claimed limitation of “inserted into the gas introducing chamber through the first opening” is an intermediate method step and not material to the patentability of the final apparatus. Metzger further includes an annular fixture (5).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 10, 11, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Metzger in view of Smith et al. (US 3,944,249).

Metzger is discussed above and fails to show a cylindrical diffuser housing.

Smith et al. discloses an inflator comprising an inflator housing (22); a diffuser portion (14) with a cylindrical diffuser housing (36) with a plurality of gas discharging holes (40) and an airbag (6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Metzger with the teachings of Smith et al. to provide a diffuser housing in order to provide a more even gas distribution to the airbag.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

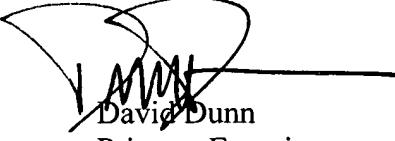
7. Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Dunn whose telephone number is 571-272-6670. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



David Dunn  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3616